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ABSTRACT

Volunteers can serve as a means to educate the public about environmental issues and increase stewardship ethic. This booklet is designed to provide much of the key information about designing and managing environmental volunteer programs to educate the general public. The booklet is based on the experiences of a volunteer program called Island County Washington State University Beach Watchers. The booklet is organized into nine sections that describe: (1) an overview of the program; (2) the program's purpose; (3) why using volunteers makes sense; (4) the makeup of the advisory board; (5) how to promote the program; (6) recruiting volunteers; (7) training volunteers; (8) supporting trained volunteers; and (9) evaluating the program. The section on training the volunteers includes information about set-up, locations, design, finding instructors, group size, scheduling, training materials, training volunteers as monitors, field experiences, testing, and graduation. The appendix contains a timeline for the program, instructor guidelines, resource book topics, a pretest and posttest, a sample volunteer request form, a copy of the lifestyle change survey, volunteer activity examples, a volunteer time sheet, one volunteer's personal narrative describing his and his wife's experience, and a list of goals. (MDH)

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DEVELOPING A VOLUNTEER PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

People with good direction and training will make a difference

EB1761

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CONTENTS

	Page
Overview	3
Purpose	3
Why Volunteer Programs Make Sense	3
The Advisory Board	4
Promoting the Program	5
Recruiting Volunteers	6
Training Volunteers	10
Set-Up	10
Locations	10
Design	10
Finding Instructors	11
Group Size	11
Scheduling	12
Training Materials	12
Training Volunteers as Monitors	12
Field Experiences	13
Testing	13
Graduation	13
Supporting Trained Volunteers	14
Evaluating the Program	15
Appendix	16

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Puget Sound
Water Quality Authority

OVERVIEW

Working with volunteers is one of the most rewarding experiences a public servant can have. Volunteers are often overlooked as a means to educate the public about environmental issues and to increase a badly needed stewardship ethic most Americans presently do not hold. With proper design and management, a volunteer program can pay big dividends in local communities.

Volunteers are often overlooked as a means to educate the public

PURPOSE

This booklet is designed to provide much of the key information about designing and managing environmental volunteer programs to educate the general public. It is not intended to be a finite recipe, or imply that different ideas and techniques would not be equally successful. It is a sharing of ideas, concepts, and techniques that have worked very well with other programs.

Without a strong local need volunteer programs will fail, no matter how well designed. This booklet is based on the successful experiences of a volunteer program called Island County WSU Beach Watchers.

WHY VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS MAKE SENSE

As we've moved into the 1990s public concern about preserving water quality and the environment has grown. This makes it easier to conduct volunteer programs that educate the public. The public is interested!

Volunteer programs have the potential to provide substantial benefits to the community. Many of the problems encountered today regarding environmental impacts, reduced water quality, or habitat loss, have been brought about by people acting in a shortsighted or uninformed way.

Volunteer programs make a lot of sense. Through education and training, volunteers become model stewards in their own communities. A distinct advantage is that volunteers live in the local communities in which change is sought. Having them located there creates a grass-roots effort that works 24 hours a day. In addition, volunteers communicate with their neighbors with ease, are not seen as regulators, and continue living in the area; they can tell if changes are being made by their neighbors. They also have the ability to help their neighbors and friends in a timely manner, unlike state or local agency officials.

Educated volunteers can collect information about their area and notice when something is not right. They can become sentinels in the community and through this involvement can inform state and local officials about problems. Additionally, they are there to help local officials deal with identified problems in their area.

THE ADVISORY BOARD

Board members must feel that they are more than just sounding boards

In developing a volunteer program for public education, it is critically important to build a quality advisory board. Do not select people for this board simply because they like the idea. Select them based on their ability to assist in the formation and community acceptance of the program. This will mean that some advisory board members may not necessarily be enthusiastic about the concept. They may even have reservations about the program's ability to be effective; its political influence; its role as a regulator; its impact on regulatory agencies, the industry, and farming; and its competition with other environmental groups in the area.

In rural communities it is important to have people on the board seen as community leaders. They should be respected members of the community familiar with the sponsoring program's goals and who respect its efforts. They should be open-minded so that they can buy into the concept, if not already sold on the program. They should be people who can help find financial and human resources for the program.

Ideally, the board members should represent the area being served geographically, but that may not always be possible. At least, they should represent areas of interest in the community that could be impacted by the program. The board should have about 8 to 10 members. This group size makes it easier to conduct business. They should also be able to attend several meetings early on in the development process.

Board members need to know each other somewhat so that they have a sense of where the others stand on issues. This can be achieved by spending some time at the first meeting of the board talking about what each person does. It is also helpful to highlight each member's representational role. If you cannot define this, point out why each member was invited to be on the board, e.g., "John, I wanted you on the board because I feel you really understand the farming community and can do a good job of looking out for their interests as we put this program together." During the introduction, visit with the board members about contributions they could make to the program. Inviting people to be on the board should be more than a letter. It needs to be a face-to-face visit that outlines what you envision the program to be and the role that each invitee of the board will have with the program. Repeat this somewhat when the group meets for the first time.

Make board members feel like they are more than just sounding boards. Ideally, they must develop some ownership of the program. This will strengthen their input. Such a partnership is a difficult thing to convey early on, but you must attempt it. The attempt will be noticed, even if the ownership hasn't been transferred. Allow the board members to be involved in deciding how the program will be designed. This should be more than a rubber-stamping process, although some members may be very happy with that approach.

If you have chosen quality people for the advisory board, they will be very busy with other things in their lives. Since they will be the first people in the community to defend and promote the program, it is important to make a good impression on them. They must see that the program will be run in a professional manner. Provide them with information prior to meetings so they can have the opportunity to read it. Meetings must have agendas set in advance. In advisory board meetings, focus on getting program advice from the board. Several good references on advisory boards are available.

The greatest honor you can pay a board member is to take his or her advice

Giving advisory board members assignments that are not overly burdensome is a good way to help them develop ownership. The key words are "not overly burdensome." When board members give advice, be sure it has been heard and understood. This may mean writing the ideas onto a blackboard for others in the group to see. **The greatest honor you can pay a board member is to take his or her advice.** Be sure that accepted advice is consistent with the goals of the program and will enhance it. Always maintain a high professional ethic and standards for the program and insist that the board do so as well.

Ask board members to share the responsibility of screening program volunteers. They can also be there to advise the program when special problems arise, using a group problem-solving perspective.

PROMOTING THE PROGRAM

This is one of the most challenging aspects of program development since it's hard to know when to start the process. It may seem as though it could never be too early to start promoting. But the program design will probably change as the advisory board provides input. Do not send crossed signals to the advisory board and to the promotion, sending one message to the board and another to the population at large.

Promotion has several stages: the preprogram, program development, and the ongoing program. In the pre-program stage, communicate a general concept of what you are trying to do to key leaders in the community and your prospective board members. The program will be an effective way to use the talents of local people. Choose those who are interested in educating their neighbors and others about how human activities affect local natural resources.

Selecting a program name and logo is an important part of promotion and can be very difficult. Develop the name and logo as soon as possible. It would seem that the pioneering group of volunteers should have the honor. However, this approach often fails to get the job done quickly, so you may have to make an executive decision. Some cautions are worth noting. Names and logos convey associations in people's minds that may not portray the image you want, so take care to avoid this pitfall. Avoid names that sound like an environmental political action group. Keep the name and logo as politically neutral and nonpartisan as possible.

Once the board begins its work and program goals and processes become more fixed, program development messages to the media can begin. These messages must

specifically identify who is behind the program, what its goals are, why it is needed, who you want to become involved, and the names of the board members. It should also solicit help from the community. You can accomplish this by contacting local media several times. The first news release informs the public about the formation of the advisory board, including the purpose of the program, whose program it is, and why it is needed. The second news release can deal with the finalizing of the program design and a first call for interested volunteers. The third and subsequent releases can be a call for volunteers with projected dates of training, goals of the program, whose program it is, the type of training volunteers will receive, types of instructors used in the training, specific things the training will cover, where people can obtain an application form, and an application deadline. This release must also say that interviews will be conducted and give an interview time.

It seems like it is never too early to start promoting

Ongoing program promotion is crucial for establishing the program in the commmunity. Use media to sell the program. Invite media often, sends lots of news releases, and develop press packs to assist reporters. Media people can help form the public image of a program and should always be a priority group to work with. Only invite media to activities that will demonstrate desired aspects of the program.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

This is the most important element of the program. The program's success depends on trained volunteers who work in the community. Attention paid at this level will see multiple returns on the training investment.

Recruiting volunteers is often referred to as the screening process. Screening is essential since the training phase of the program is very costly and each dollar must be used wisely. Screening is also one of the most difficult parts of the program to carry out with total success. It consists of three steps: recruitment, interviewing, and obtaining commitments.

Proper recruitment procedures inform the community that certain types of volunteers are being sought and what those volunteers will gain, and shows people that this is a quality, professionally run program. The messages do not have to include specific language such as "looking for volunteers who have backgrounds in environmental sciences," or "looking for volunteers who have education backgrounds." Finding many people with those qualifications is not likely. And these messages may scare away people who could be terrific volunteers. Some of the best volunteers in other programs have been those who had no formal training in educational methods and were unsure of themselves. Some programs provided not only quasi-technical training, but also an opportunity to grow personally, develop an elevated ecological awareness, and improve general self-esteem.

The training offered is a key attraction for potential volunteers. Be specific about what the training involves so people know what they will encounter. The program will attract many applicants, some will make great volunteers and others simply want to learn. Some want to make a difference in their community. The interview process will sort them out. Your goal is to select a balanced mix of people who can be trained to work in their own community.

Attention paid at this level will see multiple returns on the training investment

Interviewing is critical. Many people who operate volunteer programs don't like making this investment. However, the program will be more successful if you train 5 motivated, dedicated people than 50 uncommitted ones. The training investment and the investment following training are high. Selecting the right people will make both investments pay off and reduce the time wasted trying to motivate and direct volunteers later on. Interviewing does more than select people. It sends a message to those accepted that they are special and to the general community that the program has standards. It is a subtle influence, but it does make a difference.

Have all prospective candidates fill out applications, even those you know personally, and prescreen people using the applications. There is often not enough time to interview all applicants. An ideal number of interviewees is about 30, a two-day process. Using prescreening, the ratio of those accepted into the program should be high, possibly two out of three.

The goal of the interview is to inform and become informed. The interviewee must be informed about the program, what to expect, and what is expected. The interview team should learn about the candidate's qualities, history, and motivations. Have a team conduct the interviews. Use the board members for this task. It gives them higher status as evaluators, and they add a lot to the process by eliciting good information from the candidates.

Schedule interviews and let the candidates know the schedule by including this information on the application form. Be sure the form states that all interviews **will be scheduled** with selected applicants.

Allow the interview team time to become familiar with the process of interviewing. Usually one person explains the concept behind the program and how it fits into the community. Another asks questions about the person's volunteer experience, another explains the training program and how that will work and what will be taught, and another person describes the kinds of projects volunteers might get involved in. All interviewers should ask the candidates questions to determine three main things: do they know what it means to be a volunteer, are they significantly interested in helping others in the community, and do they have a history of spending time in the program's target area?

Understanding the candidates' work history, hobbies, educational background, physical constraints, and personal interests will help as well. But the most important thing to determine is their level of understanding of what it means to be a volunteer (they should have experience, the more the better) and the extent of their potential dedication and desire to help others. Applicants often write on their application form "I want to help" in the section that asks them to tell why they want to become a volunteer. These are good words to see. It indicates that they feel they are a part of the community and will work to improve it.

Prior to the interviews, help the interviewers develop a simple method of rating each candidate. This will make it easier to rank the candidates when all the interviews are complete. Take notes during interviews. Halfway through the interviews, things start blurring as to who said what and which candidate had what background even though the application is available. Prior to each interviewing day, give the interviewers copies of the candidates' applications. This way all interviewers have the same information in front of them during the interview. Tactfully caution interviewers about stereotyping candidates.

Schedule interviews every half hour. This gives adequate time for interviewing and leaves 5 minutes or so between interviews for the team to discuss their impressions of the interviewee. Notify all prescreened applicants about the interview time one to two weeks in advance. Assign candidates a specific time on the interview schedule, but also give them an opportunity to call in if that is unsatisfactory to try to get it changed. Do your best to see that all candidates are interviewed by the team.

The goal of the interview is to inform and become informed

People with certain characteristics do not seem to work out as volunteers. This is not to imply that such people won't work out, only that sometimes people with such traits have not had as good a history of performance as others selected for a volunteer program.

People who have worked by themselves their entire life (in a career) generally find it more difficult to work with others as a volunteer. Two reasons may account for this. In work situations, people may have been forced to team up because that was what the boss wanted. They were paid to do it and their tolerance for working with others existed due to monetary reasons. When people who have a history of not voluntarily working with others join a volunteer group, they no longer have a monetary reason for being tolerant. Tolerance must come from within. People who have trouble working with others usually drop from the program quickly. Very few people drop from the training program, only afterwards.

Some people gravitate to jobs that do not require much interaction with others. These people may do so because they find that type of work environment better for them personally. In these cases, look for other things in their lives that fulfill the need to interact with people, such as family activities, church involvement or other memberships in clubs and organizations outside of work.

Some people who apply look good on paper, but have not done any volunteer work outside their work environment. In fact, some of them view committee work during their career as "volunteer work." Use this definition: a volunteer is one who is **not paid** for time spent. On the other hand, many people fail to put down their involvement in organizations like Kiwanis, Lions, Soroptomists, and the Rotary as volunteer work, even though they may have been highly involved in community projects in those organizations. Getting this information is an important part of the interview. If you do not find this kind of information through questioning, you may assume that the person has no real experience working as a volunteer.

Some candidates admit they have never volunteered because their career got in the way, but that they intend that to change. The older these people are, the greater the risk of payback failure. As people grow older, they develop fairly strong life habits.

The last component of the volunteer screening and interviewing process is to obtain commitments from the candidates. They must be willing to do the work outlined in the volunteer contract and abide by the rules of the program. They must sign a document to that effect. If they have not signed it prior to their interview, this is the first item of business with them. Always ask if they understand what the commitment is and if they have any questions or problems with making the commitment. Most have no problem.

The actual program design may differ later, but getting the volunteer to sign a contract is a valuable step that builds motivation for following through after the training. The managers of such a program would never take a volunteer to court because he or she failed to fulfill the contract's commitment. It is just a formal way of saying that each party agrees to do certain things in exchange for certain services (training and support).

"I want to help"

These are good words to see!

Following each interview, tell the interviewee when he or she will be contacted about the outcome of the interviews. Interviewees also need to know when training begins, should they be selected. This is an ideal time to ask them if they would have trouble attending any part of the training beyond what is already noted in the application. All trainees must attend all of the class. Stress this with all candidates. But it's okay if they miss one or two with the intent of making them up the following year. You may videotape classroom sessions for absent trainees, but do not videotape field experiences!

At the end of the interviews, take 15 to 20 minutes as a team to rank all candidates. Usually a strong candidate for one interviewer will also be for another. This also applies for weak candidates. The middle group may cause some exchange of ideas about why each interviewer ranked them the way they did. **Reach consensus on these candidates.** You must be comfortable with all the potential trainees.

DON'T DISCRIMINATE against people of different physical abilities, ages, sex, races, and creeds. Find people who meet your criteria of experience and interest in helping others regardless of other characteristics. An individual with a disadvantage may be unable to perform a role in one area and yet excel in others. However, creating a role simply for such a person does little for either the program or the person if the role is not a vital one.

One selection that may seem to make sense is to identify a "perfect volunteer" and then multiply that person by the number the number of volunteers needed. This is **not** a good idea. The best group of volunteers will be that group with a fair amount of diversity. Getting people who all want to do the same kind of thing as volunteers will make your educational program very weak. A strong educational program requires many kinds of talents. Some volunteers will be good at speaking to groups, some work well with young people, and some like to work behind the scenes. Some write well, some are artists, and some like to take photos. Some volunteers like teamwork and some don't. Some like to collect data in a scientific manner and some hate collecting data, and so on. The key is diversity!

Communicating with all applicants is vital in building a strong base of support, even though you may reject some of them. Let them know the outcome of the screening process in a letter soon following the selection. Sometimes it pays to wait on this until the interviews are scheduled in case someone drops out. This gives you a candidate to fill in the interview schedule. Following the interviews, call and write to each interviewee about the outcome. Always mention to those not selected that they will be contacted the following year to see if they are still interested. Those people who were rated highly, but didn't quite make the cut-off are the first people on the list for the next year.

There are no infallible screening procedures. There is always the chance that an individual will take advantage of the training, and figuratively be seen no more, failing to even pay lip service to the contractual agreement. Occasional encounters with these people is unavoidable. In the long run it is probably best to let them go their own way quietly without significant comment. Others in the group, even the person's friends, will recognize the person's poor attitude. While the investment in those individuals has been considerable and therefore wasted, the cost of retaining them is likely to be even more prohibitive. Trying to retain such a person could result in extraordinary damage to group cohesiveness, interaction, and public awareness.

Small rooms provide a closeness and help build the team

TRAINING VOLUNTEERS

Quality, high visibility training will attract high caliber people to the program. The training should be well done and comprehensive. The instructors must be knowledgeable and good teachers. Preferably, they should be unbiased or any bias pointed out to the group diplomatically. There are many facets of training: set-up, locations, design, finding instructors, group size, scheduling, cost control, training materials, monitoring training (if needed), field experiences, dealing with absences, testing, and graduation.

Set-Up

Designing training that covers many topics requires considerable effort well in advance. Clarify your curriculum two months before the training. Use the advisory board to get suggestions for subjects and for potential instructors. Contact instructors more than one month in advance; good instructors are busy people.

Locations

Determine where your training will be held. Try to hold training in a logistically practical area, maybe close to the area being served. This may make it easier to prepare for the training sessions, if you have to haul lots of equipment and materials.

Keep trainee groups small so that they can interact well with the other trainees and the instructors. And then find classrooms that are the right size. For example, if a big hall and a smaller, but workable, room are both available, choose the smaller room. Small rooms provide a feeling of closeness that helps create comradery.

Have tables available for all trainees and instructors. You will also need areas to place screens or computer monitors, supplies, and audiovisual equipment.

Design

Begin the training by providing an overview of the area's natural resource problems. Set up the training to cover the most intriguing portion(s) first, the topics people are most interested in. Then deal with other related topics.

Some programs hold training two days per week over a several-week period. This frequency may put a maximum load on staff, but enhances trainee teamwork later on. You may want to leave at least a day between classes to allow time for setting up materials for the next class.

About one-third of the training should be field experiences. This makes conducting training in the evening very difficult. We recommend that you only conduct training during the day. Field experiences add a great deal to the training. You can weave them into a day's training so that the latter half of the day is spent in the field. This may stretch the day longer than normally scheduled. Those people who must leave are free to do so, but you'll find that many will stay.

Use lots of audiovisuals in classroom sessions to maintain interest and help volunteers retain information. Encourage lecturers to use audiovisuals extensively, and do not invite back those who refuse to use them.

Very few drop from the training program, only afterwards

Finding Instructors

Many good instructors will come and speak to volunteers at no cost. Find them at colleges or universities, state agencies, county governments, or local organizations specialized in various disciplines. Begin searching for them early. Your goal is to find instructors who know their subject well and are unbiased (if possible). Try to find out if they are good teachers. This can only truly be determined by the volunteers, but you can obtain a general feeling about their teaching skills by talking to people who know them.

Instructors are volunteers. Treat them with the greatest respect. Give them information about the class location, time, and audiovisual requirements early. Ask them to send an outline of their talk; some will and most won't.

Retaining instructors is relatively easy if you do a few simple things. They must feel that they have taught interested people. Hopefully, the volunteer selection/screening process will have taken care of that. Send a special thank-you note signed and commented on by all participants. Offering to pay travel expenses is also appreciated by many instructors; most refuse, but will remember the offer kindly. Eventually, instructors will realize that they have become involved in a high quality program. They will be proud to be involved as a program instructor and take pride in the accomplishments of the volunteers.

Have the trainees rate the instructors on their teaching abilities and the key information taught.

Group Size

Limit the class to around 20 people. Larger groups may have trouble getting to know each other. One of the benefits of training is the comradery of trainees and the sense of family the training creates. Keep the group small and hold training in a small room. This group feeling is important as volunteers team up following training to accomplish things in the community. They come into training as strangers and leave as friends. This enables them to work much more productively and have more fun.

Large classes also cost more to produce materials for. The cost of notebooks and photocopying can add up quickly. Also consider the logistics of organizing field trips and carpooling when planning class size.

Start early!

Scheduling

Start early! Two months goes by very quickly when you're trying to obtain instructors. Use letters, phone calls, faxes, and e-mail to make it come together as quickly as possible. Start by offering suggested dates that will work best for your training program, and be prepared to juggle dates with people.

The season which has consistently been the best for training is spring, prior to school recess. There is more daylight and the weather is usually warm, but not hot. It is also a time when fewer people take vacations, including instructors.

Following training, let the volunteers select an evening for a monthly meeting to discuss volunteer projects and continue their education with guest speakers.

Training Materials

Begin training with a pretest to garner some feel for the trainees' level of knowledge. Developing such a test can be difficult. The ideal would be for each instructor to provide two pretest questions related to materials they will cover in class. However, instructors don't always comply in time, so you must develop questions likely to be covered in the training or found in the resource handbooks. Use the pretest again at the end of training as a posttest.

Provide a resource handbook to trainees organized by subjects covered in the training. They can also use it after training as a resource. You may glean materials from Cooperative Extension publications and from handouts provided by instructors. In addition, many government agencies produce excellent educational materials.

Training Volunteers as Monitors

Monitoring the effects of human and natural changes on the area's environment is important. Monitoring can be very time-consuming and difficult. Most volunteers will have little interest in intensive monitoring. So, consider two levels of monitoring. The first level is simply walking in the area, making subjective observations of changes taking place. The second level requires serious training; volunteers selected for this level of monitoring should have some scientific background.

Portray graduation as a new beginning for each volunteer

Field Experiences

Field trips add a great deal to the quality of the training and should be a major component. Splitting a day's training in half with classroom work in the morning and a field trip in the afternoon works well.

Keeping everyone together on a field trip is a major problem unless you have bus transportation. Make group assignments to ensure that each person in the group looks out for the others in the same group. Having a person unable to find the location is not only bad for training, but creates distaste for the program. On walking field trips, especially through timbered areas, have someone check periodically to make sure everyone is still with the group.

Testing

Many volunteers have little or no experience with tests and fear them. When using the pretest and posttest, explain the process and the reason for the testing. If they feel that their scores might be shared with others, the fear is heightened. Keep the scoring confidential. Use the tests only to better understand how well the training is meeting educational needs.

Graduation

Graduation can be a special time for trainees, since this is the end of a unique period in their lives. One approach is to conduct graduation immediately following the posttest given at the end of training. You can do this in a local restaurant that can accomodate the group with some degree of privacy. Each volunteer pays for his or her own meal. Conduct the actual graduation ceremony following an extensive review of the training. This allows the trainees to express their feelings about what went well and what didn't. This can take up to an hour. A second scenario is to hold graduation in the evening at a very nice restaurant, a dress-up affair. This type of graduation has more bang to it, but requires more work.

In either case, portray the graduation as a new beginning for each volunteer. It is also a time to reinforce the new path of involvement for the trained volunteers. Award specially designed graduation certificates to each volunteer. Following graduation, prepare a news release with an accompanying photo of the graduating class. This type of recognition reinforces the volunteers' commitment to each other, the public, and the environment.

For either type of ceremony, bring in a prominent person to speak on some environmental issue relevant to the program. A local politician with an interest in environmental issues may be glad to address the group. Invite such a person well in advance to be sure he or she can attend. Try to choose someone who is sincerely interested in an appropriate subject. An inspirational speaker addressing the value and importance of stewardship and volunteerism may also be well received.

SUPPORTING TRAINED VOLUNTEERS

They come into training as strangers and leave as friends

Volunteers are much like employees, they need to know what they should be doing. Volunteers in environmental education programs need to understand their limits of involvement. Although volunteers may be tempted to take political stands on environmental issues, it harms the program if they do so. One of the biggest challenges facing managers of such programs will be to prevent volunteers from entering the political arena as representatives of the program. When trying to change the thinking and behavior of the general public, those who hold environmental activists in low esteem will turn against the program. Its neutrality will be compromised and some people will no longer listen to the messages they need to hear.

Volunteers need assignments. Have many projects for them to choose from. This may seem difficult prior to program start-up, but ideas will come forth during training. After awhile, there will be so many ideas, you'll have to decide which ones to keep and which to discard. Offer ideas and priorities to the volunteers, matching volunteers' interests, skills and commitment levels.

The Advisory Board is another good source of ideas for volunteer projects, and will often request specific events or activities to be taken on by volunteers. However, the **best** source for volunteer project ideas is from the volunteers themselves. Ask volunteers for their ideas and priorities during training and afterwards. This not only gives volunteers more ownership and commitment to the program, but provides a more creative and diverse range of community activities. These activities may be done by individual volunteers, small teams of volunteers, or by involving the entire program in an event or activity.

Once the program becomes well known in the community, you will receive requests for volunteers from schools, day care centers, individuals, service organizations, parks, local governments, etc. You can't say yes to everything. It is especially difficult to say no early in the program, when everyone is anxious to make a difference in the community and eager to take every opportunity presented. The first year or two is critical. The program has the least amount of volunteers then and is still struggling to refine priorities and processes. It is all too easy to burn out volunteers and program staff by taking on more than they can handle.

In time, you may want to form a steering committee to prioritize and delegate volunteer projects. This narrows the focus of the program so that all the projects can be done successfully and without overburdening volunteers or program staff. You can form different committees for various project areas such as education, speakers, monitoring, events, etc.

When working with volunteers, give them credit and recognition at every opportunity. If something is published, be sure the names of the volunteers who developed it are included. Praise volunteers for specific activities when praise is warranted. Praise means the most to volunteers when given around their peers. Always remember, the volunteers must gain ownership of the program. Without it, the power of the program is severly reduced and the costs increase.

Evaluating the Program

Timeliness is everything

Measuring the program's success with certainty is difficult. Finding changes in the public's behavior is the best proof, but obtaining such proof is time-consuming and costly. Most programs will not have the funds to support extensive evaluation. So, you may use other factors to discover the program's impact. For example, how many volunteers have paid back their basic hourly commitment? What types of educational activities have been conducted? How many nonprogram people have been contacted, and how often does the program get called on to support other activities in the community? What types of audiences are addressed? What major projects are tackled by volunteers? Do the volunteers easily step forward to help and do they generate their own projects? How long do volunteers stay with the program? The answers to these kinds of questions will indicate how the volunteer program is influencing the community.

To discover the changes in practice that volunteers make, you can use a questionnaire on lifestyle changes. If the training is useful, you will see significant changes in behavior. If time and resources permit, give the survey annually. Survey evidence may also indicate how committed the volunteers are to the program and how effective they might be in reaching out to the public. Those who have made the greatest changes are more likely to want to help others change.

To Obtain More Information

If you are interested in starting a volunteer program dealing with environmental stewardship and public education, contact Washington State University Cooperative Extension in Pullman, WA 99164, or Donald B. Meehan, Island County Extension Agent, Coupeville, WA 98239-5000, (206) 679-7327.

APPENDIX

CONTENTS

Page

Timeline 17
Instructor Guidelines 18
Resource Book Topics 19
Pretest and Posttest 20
Volunteer Request Form 25
Lifestyle Change Survey 26
Volunteer Activity Examples 28
Volunteer Time Sheet 29
A Volunteer's Perspective 30
Protocols and Goals 31

TIMELINE

2 MONTHS PRIOR TO TRAINING:

Set training dates
Locate and reserve classroom location
Prepare draft of course outline, including:
- topics
- instructors
- classroom sessions/field trips
- number of days, hours in training
- pretest and posttest
- graduation

Begin scheduling instructors and field trips
Begin volunteer recruitment and application process, including:
- set application deadline and interview dates
- press releases to local news media
- develop/revise application form
- send application form to waiting list (if applicable)
- send application form to all inquiries

Hold Advisory Board meeting to discuss course outline
Select interview team
Begin developing and revising volunteer resource materials
Order publications
Order notebooks, paper, training materials

1 MONTH PRIOR TO TRAINING:

Send draft course outline and instructor's guidelines to all instructors
Begin list of instructors' audiovisual and field trip requirements
Copy and collate resource notebooks, pretests, posttests, etc.
Conduct volunteer interviews
Select volunteers
Notify all volunteer applicants
Prepare volunteer address/phone list
Send preliminary information packet to volunteers selected:
- acceptance letter
- student/volunteer address/phone list
- map/directions to class location
- program and training information
- course outline
- field trip information
- logistics information - lunch breaks, carpooling, etc.

Call and confirm all instructors 1-2 weeks prior to each class

INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

Thank you for agreeing to be an instructor for a portion of the _____ curriculum. You have been assigned a specific portion of the curriculum. To ensure that your presentation matches the presentations assigned to other instructors, please follow the guidelines described below. If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact _____ _____(name, place, phone).

1. Please focus your presentation on the topic as it relates to _____ (subject matter).

2. Your remarks should be understandable to the general public. The students represent a cross section of folks from young adults to retired senior citizens. Keep technical and scientific information to a minimum, but include enough information to help the students understand the subject.

3. Please eliminate bias from your presentation. Present the class with factual information and let them form their own opinions and attitudes. If you do include an opinion, please identify it as such.

4. If possible, please provide a written or typed outline of your presentation and other handouts or supplemental materials. If you have taught the class previously, let us know if these materials have any changes. Send to: _____ (name, address). This will permit us to prepare the material for inclusion in the students' resource books before the training begins. It will also allow students to acquaint themselves with the subject matter before your presentation.

5. If your presentation includes additional reading material such as pamphlets or articles, **please provide at least 25 copies of the material prior to the class session** (or send 1 copy and we'll make copies).

6. Consider the following in preparing your presentation:
   - *Identify the major issues surrounding the topic as they relate to _____ (subject matter).
   - *Apply the topic as closely as possible to _____ (local area), as well as to the global implications related to the topic. Include information that will answer the question, "Why should I care?"
   - *Provide the most current, state-of-the-art information about your topic as is possible.
   - *If appropriate, provide some examples of successes and failures relating to your topic.
   - *Provide suggestions for volunteer projects and classroom/community learning activities that will implement the information you have provided to the class.
   - *If appropriate, provide a bibliography.
   - *Identify resource people. Include local resources as well as regional, state, national, and private resources.

7. If you are presenting only a portion of a classroom session, please coordinate your presentation with _____ (name) to ensure that all the information listed in item 6 is covered and to avoid duplication.

8. Please notify us if you need a VCR, slide projector, or other audiovisual equipment for your presentation.

We appreciate your support and participation in our program! Please let us know if you have any questions, or if we can help you with your presentation in any way. We look forward to working with you on this exciting project, and hope you enjoy your class!

Possible Topics for a Volunteer
RESOURCE BOOK

AQUACULTURE
BEACH ECOLOGY
BEACH WILDLIFE
BIRDS
FARMS
FORESTRY
GEOLOGY/BLUFFS
GLOBAL WARMING
GROUNDWATER
GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT
HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD WASTE
LANDSCAPING
MARINE BIOLOGY
MARINE DEBRIS
MONITORING AND ANALYSIS
NATIVE PLANTS
OIL SPILLS
RECYCLING
PARKS
PESTICIDES/FERTILIZERS
SEPTIC SYSTEMS
SHORELINE REGULATIONS
SOILS/SLUDGE
TEACHING METHODS
VOLUNTEERISM/COMMUNICATION
WATERSHEDS
WETLANDS

BIBLIOGRAPHY
GLOSSARY
INTRODUCTION
LIBRARY MATERIALS
OTHER PUBLICATIONS
RESOURCE DIRECTORY

PRETEST and POSTTEST

(Fill in the blanks when necessary to match local names or circumstances.)

TRUE OR FALSE:

_____1. Using pesticides and fertilizers on farms and improperly handling animal waste can result in groundwater contamination.

_____2. Most likely, the land you live on has several soil types.

_____3. Development in a watershed can cause increased erosion rates, excessive nutrient levels, and heavy metal contamination.

_____4. Septic tanks should be inspected once every 5 to 10 years in households with average usage.

_____5. One technique used to study marine mammals is photo identification.

_____6. _____ will give out unbiased information based on facts, rather than taking sides on controversial issues.

_____7. Most of our local wetlands have been filled, drained, developed or otherwise lost to fish and wildlife.

_____8. Farmers should spread manure on fields throughout the year to avoid holding large quantities of manure in one place.

_____9. Household toxic chemicals, such as herbicides and pesticides can be flushed safely down the toilet to city sewage treatment plants for disposal.

____10. Clearcutting on unstable slopes and agricultural fields are considered nonpoint sources of pollution.

____11. Human-built structures on beaches seldom influence beach topography.

____12. Tidal action does not affect wave action.

____13. Baby seals found on the beach should be reported and transported to the local wildlife clinic immediately for proper care.

____14. Septic system failures near the beach will always be evident from the odor.

____15. There are _____ different watersheds in our county.

____16. It is safe to eat shellfish from local beaches because the county health dept. regularly monitors for PSP.

____17. Coastal bluffs are protected from sloughing by the roots of mature trees growing on them.

____18. Coarse soils decrease the chance of surface contaminants moving into groundwater.

____19. Our groundwater is not contaminated.

Page 20

____20. Landscape design makes no difference in irrigation water use; what is most important is the type of plants used.

____21. Large dairy farms manage animals waste better than small farmers.

____22. All fertilizers have nitrates in them.

____23. The major problem with logging practices is road-building activities.

____24. TFW stands for "Total Farm Wastes".

____25. The basic social group of orca, or killer whales, is the pod.

____26. The most important aspect of a pesticide label is its EPA registration number.

____27. It is safer to dispose of partially used garden chemicals in the trash than to share the product with a neighbor or friend to use in the environment.

____28. Our county's landfill is so large it will last into the next century.

____29. Fertilizers should be applied all at once in the spring to benefit plants the most.

____30. Horse owners who manage their animals and land well set aside special areas to rotate their animals into.

____31. Conserving water makes good sense because it improves the long-term capability of septic systems.

____32. My staircase going down the bluff to the beach collapsed in the last storm; now I need to get a permit to rebuild it.

____33. I can legally install a buoy near my house for my 40-foot cruiser.

____34. I want to put a dock on my privately owned beach. It will cost me $3000 according to the contractor who will do the work; and I will not need a permit from the county.

____35. Our county government has no regulations pertaining to wetlands.

____36. Septic systems threaten beach waters primarily because of failures leading to pathogenic organisms leaching onto the beach.

____37. "Topping off" tall trees around your home will prevent them from blowing over.

____38. There are only two different learning styles.

____39. People learn best if not distracted by visual aids such as slides, posters, overheads and VCRs.

SELECT THE <u>BEST</u> ANSWER TO EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

_____40. Marine debris comes from _____.

a. Coastal cities and rivers
b. Merchant marine ships, fishing boats and pleasure craft
c. Military vessels
d. Recreational beach users
e. All of the above

_____41. In aquaculture, water quality _____.

a. Does not affect the growth and quality of mussels
b. Must be superior for success
c. Is of minor significance
d. a and c
e. All of the above

_____42. Almost 1/2 of the solid waste in our landfills is ___

a. Plastic
b. Disposable diapers
c. Aluminum
d. Paper
e. Glass

_____43. Improper logging operations can reduce the vegetation near a stream usually causing _____.

a. Erosion
b. Increased PCB runoff
c. Decreased turbidity
d. Increased dissolved oxygen
e. All of the above

_____44. Horses, cows, or sheep should have _____.

a. Direct access to streams, ponds and other fresh water.
b. One permanent pasture to graze in throughout the year.
c. A system of pastures to rotate through for grazing.
d. None of the above
e. a and b

_____45. To conserve water in your landscape, _____.

a. Water slowly and deeply
b. Water in the evening or early morning
c. Reduce fertilization
d. Place plants closer together
e. All of the above

_____46. Erosion is increased by_____.

a. Steep slopes
b. Heavy rainfall
c. Buffer strips
d. All of the above
e. a and b

_____47. Wetlands are _____.

a. A natural "sponge" for water runoff from upland areas
b. Swamps which are of no value
c. A natural water filter and habitat for birds and wildlife
d. a and c
e. All of the above

_____48. Homeowners who have ill plants should determine ____ before applying a pesticide.

a. If their neighbor knows which pesticides work best
b. The cause of the problem
c. Whether the neighbors care about pesticide use
d. What the pesticide might contaminate
e. None of the above

_____49. The yard plant that poses the greatest hazard to the environment because people use more chemicals on it than any other is _____.

a. Fruit tree
b. Rhododendron
c. Perennial flower
d. Lawn
e. None of the above

_____50. Which beach habitat has more diversity of plant and animal life?

a. Sandy
b. Muddy
c. Rocky
d. Silty

_____51. What is the most efficient method of watering home gardens and landscapes?

a. Overhead automatic sprinkler systems
b. Watering by hand
c. Trickle or drip irrigation systems
d. None of the above

_____52. Salmon net pens can create problems below the pen when:

a. The bottom topography is rocky
b. The currents are swift
c. The currents are calm
d. b and c

_____53. What time of the day is the best time for seeing beached birds on a beach ?

a. Early morning
b. Mid-morning
c. Mid-afternoon
d. Early evening

FILL IN THE BLANKS:

54. A new septic system has been installed and early use has formed a "clogging mat." Is this bad ?

Why/why not? _____

55. The TFW Agreement is an agreement between _____, _____, and _____, using consensus-type negotiations rather than litigation.

56. The three "R's" of Waste Reduction are: _____, _____, and _____.

57. Floating, clear plastic bags are perceived by turtles as what kind of food? _____.

58. Which three are the key elements necessary for a piece of property to be considered a wetland by the federal government?

1. Standing water
2. Wetland plants
3. Dark brown soils
4. Cattails
5. Presence of reed canary grass
6. Use by endangered waterfowl
7. Anaerobic soils

Numbers _____, _____, and _____.

59. I plan to build my home next to the edge of the water. Do I need to worry about any building set-backs? _____.
In what cases, if any?_____.

MATCH THE LETTER OF THE DEFINITION WITH THE TERM:

____60. FJORD
____61. ESTUARY
____62. BIOACCUMULATION
____63. SURFACE WATER
____64. LEACHING
____65. NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION
____66. WATERSHED
____67. BUFFER STRIP
____68. POINT SOURCE POLLUTION
____69. STEWARDSHIP
____70. METHEMOGLOBINEMIA

A. The individual's responsibility to manage life and property with proper regard to the rights of others.
B. A condition caused by nitrates in infants.
C. Vegetation strip left intact along a stream or lake.
D. Substances dissolved out of the soil by flowing or standing water.
E. Water resources available as lakes, streams, and runoff.
F. Pollution characterized by wide distribution and by variability in time and location — pollution which does not come out of a pipe.
G. A long, narrow, steep-sided marine inlet, carved by a glacier, usually with a sill at the mouth.
H. The process by which a contaminant accumulates in the tissues of an individual organism.
I. Pollution collected and released at a specific and easily measured place.
J. The total region that drains into a river or stream.
K. A confined coastal water body where fresh and salt waters meet and tides are experienced.

VOLUNTEER REQUEST FORM

DATE OF REQUEST:_____

ORGANIZATION REQUESTING VOLUNTEER:_____

_____

CONTACT PERSON:_____

PHONE #:_____

ACTIVITY REQUESTED/SUBJECT MATTER:_____

_____

_____

_____

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION (AGE GROUP/SPECIAL INTERESTS/ETC.):

_____

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:_____

LOCATION OF ACTIVITY:_____

DATE & TIME OF ACTIVITY:_____

DATE VOLUNTEER(S) NEEDS TO BE CONFIRMED:_____

MATERIALS NEEDED (AUDIOVISUAL AIDS/DISPLAYS/HANDOUTS/ETC.):_____

_____

_____

VOLUNTEER(S) SCHEDULED FOR ACTIVITY:_____

_____

DATE CONFIRMED - WITH VOLUNTEER(S):_____

- WITH REQUESTING ORGANIZATION:_____

COMMENTS:

LIFESTYLE CHANGE SURVEY

THE _____ PROGRAM WAS DESIGNED TO ENABLE YOU TO WORK IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO HELP PEOPLE CHANGE THE WAY THEY ACT REGARDING WATER QUALITY PROTECTION. EVEN THOUGH THE TRAINING WAS NOT SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO GET YOU TO MAKE CHANGES IN YOUR LIFESTYLE, IT MAY HAVE PROMPTED YOU TO DO SO. PLEASE TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO HELP US UNDERSTAND IF YOU HAVE MADE ANY CHANGES. CHANGES WOULD INCLUDE ANY ACTION YOU HAVE TAKEN THAT IS DIFFERENT DUE TO YOUR TRAINING, AND ALSO ANY OF YOUR ATTITUDES OR BELIEFS ABOUT THE WORLD THAT ARE NOW DIFFERENT.

HAVE YOU MADE ANY CHANGES IN: (PLEASE CIRCLE:)

1) THE WAY YOU GARDEN OR LANDSCAPE, SUCH AS:

PESTICIDE USE ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
FERTILIZER USE ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
WATERING ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
PLANTING ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
LANDSCAPE DESIGN ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
OTHER ? _____	YES	NO	PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

2) THE USE OF HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, SUCH AS:

CLEANING AGENTS ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
PAINTS,SOLVENTS ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
DETERGENTS ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
OTHER ? _____	YES	NO	PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

3) THE USE AND/OR MAINTENANCE OF MOTOR VEHICLES, SUCH AS:

CARPOOLING ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
USING MASS TRANSIT ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
RECYCLING OIL ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
OTHER ? _____	YES	NO	PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

_____

4) THE WAY YOU DISPOSE OF YOUR GARBAGE AND WASTE, SUCH AS:

RECYCLING ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTES ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
COMPOSTING ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
OTHER ? _____	YES	NO	PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

5) **THE WAY YOU USE AND/OR MAINTAIN YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM (IF APPLICABLE)?**

YES NO PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

6) **THE PRODUCTS YOU BUY AND USE AT HOME ?**

YES NO PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

7) **YOUR USE OF WATER IN THE HOME ?**

YES NO PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

8) **THE WAY YOU VIEW LAND AND WATER USE, SUCH AS:**

WETLANDS ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
BLUFFS ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
FORESTS ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
FARMS ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
AQUACULTURE ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
DEVELOPMENT ?	YES	NO	PLAN TO
OTHER ? _____	YES	NO	PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

9) **THE WAY YOU OBSERVE AND USE BEACHES?**

YES NO PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

10) **THE WAY YOU APPROACH WILDLIFE FOUND ON THE BEACH?**

YES NO PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

11) **THE THINGS YOU TALK ABOUT TO FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS?**

YES NO PLAN TO

COMMENTS:_____

PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON THE BACK - THANK YOU!!!

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY EXAMPLES

PRESENTATIONS: Community Groups, Service Clubs, Schools, Public Hearings, Port Districts, Agency Meetings, Environmental Groups, Radio, Television, etc.

MONITORING: Marine Debris Survey, PSP, Low-Tide Bucket Survey, Health Dept. Survey, Beached Bird Survey, Water Quality Testing, Salmon Stream Renovation, Beach Characterization, Profiling and Monitoring, etc.

EVENTS: Earth Day Rallies, CoastWeeks, Race Week, County Fair, Dairy Open House, Harvest Fest, Beach Clean-ups, Research Conference, Bluffs, Beaches and Bulkheads Seminar, Household Hazardous Waste Collection, Water Festival, etc.

DEVELOPING: Educational Displays, Brochures, Resource Library, Newsletter, Self-Guided Wetland Tour, Beach Monitoring Process, Jr. _____ Program, Teacher's Packets, etc.

ORGANIZING: Fundraisers, Recycling Task Force, Oil Spill Task Force, School Recycling, etc.

ASSISTING OTHER ORGANIZATIONS: Adopt-A-Beach, Audubon Society, Dept. of Wildlife, State Parks, Marine Science Centers, Health, Solid Waste and Shoreline Planning Depts., Soil Conservation Service, Noxious Weed Board, Fish Hatchery, 4-H, Naval Air Station, Public and Private Schools, etc.

BEACH CLEAN-UP
FOOD PYRAMID DISPLAY DEVELOPMENT
SURVEY LITTER FROM BEACHED BOAT
CREEK PROJECT MEETING
ECOLOGY CLUB
MONTHLY MEETING
WATER FESTIVAL MEETING
GARBAGE RECYCLING
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
TRASH SURVEY
RADIO TALK SHOW
WATER FESTIVAL MEETING
BEACH WALK GUIDELINES MEETING
BEACH WALK AND TALK
STREAM MONITORING
WASTE REDUCTION TASK FORCE MEETINGS
ROTARY CLUB PRESENTATION
EAGLE NEST SEARCH
TIDELANDS RESOURCE SURVEY-GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT
TV STATION BEACH WALK/INTERVIEW
CLAM MONITORING
BEACH MONITORING
GLOBAL WARMING CONFERENCE
FISH PRINTING
TRAINEE INTERVIEWS
SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY CONFERENCE
ZOO SCHOOL PRESENTATION
BEACH FIELD TRIP
VOLUNTEERISM CLASS FOR TRAINEES
BULLETIN BOARD PREPARATION
ARTWORK FOR TEACHERS PACKET, ETC.
WATER QUALITY TESTING CLASS
ESTUARY TRAINING PREPARATION AND INSTRUCTION
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
WORK ON NEWSPAPER INFO FILE
COUNTY MUSEUM

GARAGE SALE FUNDRAISER
PARK CLEAN-UP
BEACH MONITORING/PROFILING
STORMWATER RUN-OFF REQUEST
MARINE DEBRIS DAILY ACCUMULATION SURVEY
WETLANDS SEMINAR
LOWTIDE BEACH WALK
CLASSROOM TALK
WILDFLOWER WALK
CRITTER SURVEY
SALMON ADVENTURE MEETING
PRE-SCHOOL CLASS
COUNTY FAIR SET-UP
COUNTY FAIR
COUNTY FAIR BOOTH TAKE-DOWN
LIBRARY DISPLAY
WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL (Educational Display)
BEACHES PRESENTATION
STORM DRAIN STENCILLING
WETLAND RESTORATION TRAINING
HARVEST FEST DISPLAY/BEACH WALK
WETLAND MONITORING
GROUNDWATER PRESENTATION TRAINING
WETLAND WORK PARTY
MARINE SCIENCE LAB
ATTEND PUBLIC HEARINGS
ATTEND RELEVANT TRAINING COURSES
MARINE SCIENCE CENTER
DOUBLE BLUFF BEACH PRESENTATION PREPARATION
SHELLFISH MONITORING
ASSIST PLANNING DEPT. W/WATER RESOURCE LIBRARY
STREAM MONITORING WORKSHOP
COUNTY FAIR COMMITTEE MEETING
WHALE MUSEUM/TIDEPOOL WALK
CONSTRUCT WORM BOXES/BARREL COMPOSTER

VOLUNTEER TIME SHEET

NAME:_____ **DATES: FROM**_____**TO**_____

DATE:	***ACTIVITY/EVENT/DESCRIPTION:***	**HOURS**	**MILES**

TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS FOR ____ (year):

YOU MAY CLAIM THE FOLLOWING AS VOLUNTEER TIME:

VOLUNTEER PROJECT TIME, INCLUDING PREPARATION TIME; PHONE WORK; DISTRIBUTING INFORMATION; MEETINGS; TRAINING (CLAIM 1/2 OF TIME SPENT AT TRAINING OTHER THAN INITIAL COURSE).

VOLUNTEER SIGNATURE:_____ **DATE:**_____

COUNTY AGENT SIGNATURE:_____ **DATE:**_____

A Volunteer's Perspective

(adapted)

When my wife and I joined Beach Watchers four years ago I was a skeptic. My previous duties took me to many places, in most of which I found myself enrolled in one college or another. Virtually all colleges spoke a great deal of their "commitment to the community" which was, as it turned out, cynical illusion, academic smoke and mirrors, community pacification and/or mere lip service. So I think I may be excused for my skepticism, particularly when I found Washington State University was the organization's sponsor. It soon became evident that WSU was to be an exception to the rule.

WSU's commitment to the environment and to Beach Watchers have made the concept work. It works so well, in fact, that requests for project assistance have become a problem. We are in danger of volunteer burn-out. People have the interest and desire, and volunteers are willing, but WSU provides the catalyst which makes it all possible. This synergy coupled with the almost overwhelming interest has occasioned the need to prioritize our projects, thus the following protocols and goals. They are not by any means complete, but are a mere starting point.

My wife and I are both water babies, born and raised within an easy bicycle ride or short walk of the sea which drew us inevitably toward Beach Watchers. But, fresh water is no less vital than salt. Most, if not all, Beach Watcher activities are equally applicable to water sources of all kinds. After all, our bodies consist predominately of water. We can survive long periods without food, suffer war, disease and other deprivations and yet continue on. But, we cannot live without water! No matter what our color, our politics, ethnic background, creativity, intelligence, or other qualities, we must have water to survive. And, yes, we carelessly abuse it, pollute it, defile it, waste it, and otherwise take it for granted until the well is dry, at which time it is too late. So, thank you Washington State University for the opportunity for us to help maintain this precious commodity and inform a well-meaning, yet careless public of its value. May **your** well remain full to the brim.

W. R. and Mary Chapman
Oak Harbor, Washington
March 1993

(P.S. I wrote this long before I was even aware of the development of this manual.)

PROTOCOLS AND GOALS

The ultimate goal of a water quality public education volunteer group is the education of local residents regarding the efficient use of our most important resource, water, for irrigation, recreation and habitation. The education consists of information about the multifaceted interdependence between humans and fresh, salt, and brackish waters. Included are facts about water quality effects from the uplands, including nonpoint pollution caused by inadequate sewage management, storm runoff, and a lack of awareness by humans; housing development and related services; and how the cliffs and beaches between the sea and land interact. This educational goal can best be achieved by the following protocols:

1. **Nonpolitical activities.** Protection of the environment must cut across ideological lines; the environment has no ideology.

2. **Nonconfrontational methods.** While direct confrontation may draw attention to a problem, real or perceived, once the problem is defined, continued confrontation over time will create more heat than light. It usually polarizes thinking and attitudes, rarely accomplishing the goals of any of the parties involved. Far preferable is cooperation based upon proven, enlightened self-interest and consensus. Today's eco-craze may well be tomorrow's egg on the face.

3. **Volunteerism.** All staff are volunteers with the exception of one part-time staff member to coordinate grant proposals and ongoing projects. Membership is open to anyone willing to commit sufficient time and effort to complete the rigorous 100 hours of formal training and dedicate a specified number of hours in the field after completion, and who can comply with the spirit of the democratically derived group guidelines. The program is designed to cross as many socioeconomic lines as possible.

4. **Organization.** The prime movers are the various committee chairs. It is at the committee level that most day-to-day tasks are accomplished. Committee chairs report to the Steering Committee for task prioritization and coordination between committees, paticularly in those instances where committee chairs are unable to effect adequate problem resolution among themselves.

Membership in any and all committees is strictly voluntary. Funding and other allocations of tangible assets shall be determined by the Steering Committee, the Finance Committee and the committee seeking financial support. Assent by consensus is a primary goal.

Membership in no way precludes an individual from taking part in the public democratic process in almost any manner the individual sees fit. However, members must agree not to represent themselves as acting for the organization without first obtaining the specific authorization of the group in consensus via committee chairs and the Steering Committee. This includes subtle influences such as the wearing of clearly identifiable clothing such as jackets and/or ball caps, and less subtle means such as verbal representations without group authority. Members are expected to comply with the above in a spirit of cooperation and restraint.

The organization will attempt to avoid involvement with special interest groups and those with a more obscure, hidden, or strident agenda. It has been said that the squeaking wheel gets the most grease. However, when all the wheels start squeaking at once and attempt to outdo each other, the quiet wheel is already accomplishing its job, silently and far more efficiently than the others.

This interpretation of goals and general protocols is not, nor is it intended to be, all-encompassing. It is simply a generalized summary of the organization's raison d'etre.

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